

Message Text

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70

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15

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FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1605

INFO USCINCSO

DIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 9184

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, VE

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT TELLS POLITICOS NOT TO MIX MILITARY IN
ELECTION CAMPAIGN

1. QUESTIONED AT HIS WEEKLY PRESS CONFERENCE OCTOBER 25 ABOUT RUMORS THAT SOME POLITICAL PARTIES ARE TRYING TO MIX THE VENEZUELAN MILITARY IN THE NATIONAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN, PRESIDENT CALDERA TERMED SUCH ACTION "SENSELESS". HE POINTED OUT THAT MILITARY DO NOT VOTE IN ORDER THAT THEY CAN ASSURE THE VOTING RIGHTS OF OTHER VENEZUELAN. CALDERA STATED THAT IN PAST ELECTIONS THERE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN THOSE WHO TRIED TO INVOLVE THE ARMED FORCES, WHICH HAVE REFUSED TO PAY ATTENTION. HE SAID THAT THE CANDIDATES SHOULD TAKE CARE TO KEEP IN MIND THE NEED TO ACT DURING THE CAMPAIGN IN A MANNER WHICH WILL STRENGTHEN NATIONAL LIBERTY.

2. SAME DAY ARMY INTELLIGENCE CHIEF GENERAL ARAQUE ROJAS TOLD REPORTERS FLATLY, "THERE WILL NOT BE A MILITARY COUP", AND CON- DEMNED THOSE WHO SPREAD RUMORS ABOUT SUCH MATTERS. HE CONCLUDED THAT CONDITIONS DO NOT EXIST IN VENEZUELA WHICH COULD BRING ABOUT MILITARY INTERVENTION IN THE POLITICAL SCENE, AND SAID THAT THE SECURITY CLIMATE AS THE COUNTRY PREPARES TO VOTE IS QUITE NORMAL.

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3. COMMENT: RUMORS ABOUT POSSIBLE MILITARY COUPS ARE COMMON IN VENEZUELA AT THIS POINT IN ELECTION CAMPAIGNS. ALSO COMMON ARE ATTEMPTS BY SOME POLITICIANS TO CLAIM POSSIBLE MILITARY INTERVENTION IF THEY ARE NOT ELECTED. AN INTERESTING VARIANT THIS YEAR IS MUTTERINGS THAT ACCION DEMOCRATICA COULD IN DESPERATION BACK A COUP IF COPEI WERE TO WIN DECEMBER 9. THOSE SPREADING SUCH GOSSIP, HOWEVER, HAVE NO ANSWER TO QUESTION, "WHAT WOULD THE ARMED FORCES HAVE TO GAIN IN SUCH AN EVENT?" UNTIL A VALID ANSWER PRESENTS ITSELF, EMBASSY DOES NOT PLACE CREDENCE IN THIS GOSSIP.
MCCLINTOCK

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